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ABSTRACT

Courses in Spanish for nurses at Loretto Heights College in Colorado combine language instruction, cross-cultural studies, instruction in medical problems particular to certain groups, medical systems and philosophy, and participation in a college-wide interdisciplinary program entitled "Values in Concert." In this program, sets of three courses are presented together, with three common meetings per semester to integrate the course content. The first two sets in which Spanish for nurses was a component were entitled "La Muerte: Art or Reality?" and "The Third Ear: The Dramatic and Intellectual Values of Sound." The third, which has been offered for two years, is "Man, Culture and Healing." Its development involved overcoming obstacles in curriculum content level, scheduling problems, and enrollment heavily weighted with nursing students. These problems required substantial cooperation and coordination among the faculty involved. The set combines a junior-level course in Spanish for nurses, a dance course in applied kinesiology, and a course in nursing concepts for practice. Its content includes session topics such as therapeutic touch, energy fields, color imagery, and Hispanic and North American values. The interdisciplinary approach and course structure allowing students and faculty to work together for understanding of the three participating disciplines provide a unique opportunity for learning and for closing the gap between liberal arts and professional education. (MSE)

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SPANISH FOR NURSES: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

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SPANISH FOR NURSES; AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

The Spanish for Nurses courses at Loretto Heights College embrace the linguistic need of the medical profession, culture and cultural differences among groups, specific medical problems particular to certain groups, medical systems and philosophy, and as a unique component, participation in the VALUES IN CONCERT series. By combining humanities courses in concertized sets with non-humanities courses, the Project touches every four-year student at the Heights. Its objectives, as stated in the Project proposal for the National Endowment for the Humanities, are to "bring humanistic skills and values to students who might otherwise not be exposed to them" allowing the participants to see connections between "humanistic studies and other disciplines." At the same time, it opens avenues for the faculty to "plan, teach and evaluate courses in conjunction with colleagues from all Program Areas." Students can relate conceptual and methodological points of contact among disciplines, and individual faculty can enlarge, through the cooperative enterprise, personal and academic horizons.

Contributing to the Project are the academic goals at Loretto Heights, the CORE Curriculum, and the Values in Conflict Project. All of them help to make Values in Concert a remarkable tool for the exercise of excellence in education and in the understanding of human values.

The Project enhances the learning environment for Humanities studies through faculty planning sessions, faculty symposia and a regional conference on interdisciplinary studies.

The procedures for the Values in Concert series are as follows:

a) Courses, in sets of three, hold three common meetings during the semester in which the set is concertized.

b) Issues for common meetings are selected in advance and instructors modify course syllabi to encompass an emphasis on the chosen topics.

The academic year of 1985 offered a total of 16 different course sets--48 courses in concert. Four new participant sets were implemented for the first time in 1984-85. The following are frameworks of the two in which Spanish is a participant. In the Fall of 1984 set #13 was initiated with the title: La Muerte: Art or Reality? Courses constituting the set were **Spanish 261:** Spanish for Nurses; **Nursing 362D:** The Developing Family and **Ballet 153:** Dance Theory.

As a second set began in Fall of 1984 set #14 was entitled The Third Ear: The dramatic and intellectual values of sound. Constituents of this set were **Spanish 361:** Oral and Written Interpretation; **Theater 120:** Voice and Diction I; and **Theater 245:** Oral Interpretation of Literature.

I will limit my discussion to a third set, one that has been part of the Project for the last two years: Set #12. Man, Culture and Healing. Components of this set are **Spanish 262:** Spanish for Nurses; **Dance 315:** Applied Kinesiology; **Nursing 362:** Nursing Process: Concepts for Practice.

Three major difficulties were presented in the formation of the set. The first was the complexity of the Nursing curriculum and the fact that the Spanish course was already a career course. The second was the fact that the students schedule competed with the nurses in being problematic and hectic. A third factor was that the number of students from the Nursing Area was double that of the other two groups.

With a lot of understanding on the part of the faculty involved and the Program Areas, the first obstacle was solved. A course from the junior Nursing curriculum was selected as allowing more flexibility. Even though the Spanish for Nurses courses are career-oriented courses, the majority of the students were not yet part of the Nursing Area, since they were freshman and sophomores. The times for the common meetings were arranged and the students were combined in groups in such a manner that a complete integration of the three programs (Spanish, Nursing and Dance) was acquired.

After a full three-day workshop, the value issue was chosen, the time of the meetings, the methodology, the place and the set title selected. During the semester, the faculty met seven times to refine the set. Course syllabi were changed to add all the details concerning the meetings and to allow some preparation on the part of the professors on values issues and questions. It was decided that the values issue should deal with the fact that persons might have a medical problem, but they are also human beings, influenced by their culture, society, environment, and peers. All of these factors influence their behavior habits, and definitely their health. The goals of the set were formulated so as to gain a better understanding of human persons, their relations to others, to themselves and to their own health.

The format for the three sessions follows:

FIRST SESSION

INTRODUCTION: (10 minutes) What is Values in Concert?

PRESENTATION OF THERAPEUTIC TOUCH: (5 minutes)

METHODOLOGY: All students participated in the perception of natural energy fields that can help to maintain or restore health:

a) through an energy field exercise using their own hands;

b) through an energy field exercise between two students.

DEMONSTRATION ON THERAPEUTIC TOUCH: (25 minutes)

METHODOLOGY: Professor and student. The rest of the class divided into three groups.

a) one group observed whether there had been any change in the student: physically, emotionally or of any other type;

b) another group observed any change in the professor performing the Therapeutic Touch experience;

c) the third group observed any change in the rest of the students.

DISCUSSION: (5 minutes)

PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT SESSION: (5 minutes)

The students received a set of Values questions which they were to answer by the second meeting.

Question and article on energy fields were assigned.

SECOND SESSION

INTRODUCTION: (10 minutes) Discussion of the article.

PRESENTATION ON ENERGY FIELDS: (5 minutes) Explanation of existing blocks of energy fields in the body that could cause pain and discomfort.

DEMONSTRATION ON COLOR IMAGERY: (25 minutes)

METHODOLOGY: All students guided by the professor participated in this experience.

DISCUSSION: (5 minutes)

Discussion of Therapeutic Touch and Color Imagery, ways of fostering optimum healing, which can be used adjunctively with other health care measures.

PREPARATION: (5 minutes)

Discussion of the values questions given in the first session.

THIRD SESSION

INTRODUCTION: (5 minutes) Hispanic and North American Values

PRESENTATION ON HISPANIC AND NORTH AMERICAN VALUES: (20 minutes)

METHODOLOGY: (20 minutes) Students were divided into groups of ten. They received a list of opposite values; for example, tradition-progress, loyality-competition, social harmony-personal fulfillment. The group had to decide which of these values were the five dominant in the United States today. Each group presented its choice. There was a brief discussion of similarities and differences. Through the same procedure, they picked the five dominant values in Hispanic culture.

DISCUSSION: (5 minutes) Results of the findings and how these value differences affect the perception of health, healing, life and death.

PRESENTATION: CURANDERISMO. Dianna Velazquez.

CONCLUSION: Participation in the Values in Concert series provides students and professors the rare opportunity of working together to improve understanding of the different perspectives of the three disciplines represented. It is also an INTERDISCIPLINARY approach to values questions and a channel to a deeper look at values issues. New instructional materials have been acquired for this common meeting. Books, films, slides, etc., speakers from the community have brought their expertise. Evaluation forms are given to the participants and are carefully considered by the professors participating, by the Program Director and by the program faculty in general. Every summer the set is refined and the critiques and suggestions of all the faculty are discussed and many times implemented.

The methodology, the time, the places, the number of meetings differ according to the nature of the values issues, the courses and the topics that are being considered. Flexibility and creativity are an integral part of this program. Its openness generates an amalgam of

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ideas that enrich not only the curriculum and the students, but the institution in general. Such a wide range of ideas has generally not been conceived as part of a small college. Nevertheless, it is a reality at Loretto Heights College, a reality of which we are all very proud.

As the year 2000 approaches, let us close the gap between a liberal art education and a professional program. They form a beautiful duet, a duet such as the one formed by the Caballero de la Mancha and Sancho Panza; sometimes complementing each other, sometimes differing completely, always profoundly human, they walk the road of their destiny.

FOOTNOTE

Values In Concert, National Endowment for the Humanities, Loretto Heights College, 1981 - 1985. Program Director, Robert L. Gibson.